



In Support of SB 2663 SD1

Ensuring Hawai'i's Sustainability

Evan Parra-Raygoza

2/25/2014

Testimony for Geothermal Energy

2/27/14, 11:30 A.m., Room 211

To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator David Y. Ige, Chair
Senator Michelle N. KIdani

From: Evan Parra-Raygoza

Re: Support for Bill SB2663 SD1 Relating to Geothermal Resources

Geothermal energy has been shown to provide a consistent renewable energy source if it is managed correctly. I believe shifting the control of permit distribution to the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) would be a wise step in the right direction of reducing Hawai'i's dependency on imported energy. The Board serves as the head of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, which is responsible for managing and controlling around 1.3 million acres of state lands, beaches, and coastal waters. The board consists of seven members that are elected with the consent of the Senate, and appointed by the governor for a 4-year term. Currently William J. Aila Jr. is the Chairperson of the BLNR. Aila has experience in tropical agriculture, and is a cultural practitioner who aims to preserve these islands for future generations.

Renewable energy sources are essential for Hawai'i to invest in due to the remoteness from other land masses. Problems with solar power and wind turbines are that the source for generating power varies with time of day and the strength of the wind. With proper geothermal resource exploration, and the BLNR controlling the permits, we can tap into a great energy source that is just below our feet. Geothermal energy has been harvested since the early 20th century and our understanding in this field has been growing greatly. This bill allots the BLNR a great deal of power but the provisions in this bill also include safeguards against excessive expansion of geothermal plants. Different provisions call for mediators and second hearings

when preliminary hearings end in turmoil. After any decision is made by the BLNR, their decision can be appealed directly to the intermediate appellate court for review. Overall, geothermal energy can be an excellent renewable energy source for the islands if taken over by the right board that will ensure a balance between nature and sustainable energy for the future. Shifting power to the BLNR, along with other provisions and safeguards, give geothermal energy plants a chance to steer Hawai'i back into a self-sustaining future.

Thank you for taking your time to read my testimony and have a great day.

Evan Parra-Raygoza